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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/020,718	12/14/2001	Philip J. Kellman	42055/SAH/K415	9540
23363	7590	12/31/2003	EXAMINER	
CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP 350 WEST COLORADO BOULEVARD SUITE 500 PASADENA, CA 91105			HARRIS, CHANDA L	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3714	

DATE MAILED: 12/31/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/020,718	KELLMAN, PHILIP J. <i>CW</i>
	Examiner Chanda L. Harris	Art Unit 3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 October 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-31 and 63-72 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-31 and 63-72 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 11.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

In response to the Amendment filed 10/14/03, Claims 1-31 and 63-72 are pending.

Claims 32-62 are withdrawn.

Claim Objections

Claims 69-70 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 66-67. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-31, 65, 68, and 72 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ditto (US 6,270,352) in view of Boon (US 6,022,221). The rejection from the previous office action is maintained and is incorporated herein by reference.

1. [Claims 1,21,31]: Regarding Claims 1,21, and 31, Ditto discloses a computer including one or more memory portions (e.g. RAMs). See Col.4: 28-33. Ditto discloses software for implementing a trial loop (i.e. single presentation of a problem), wherein the learning trials are presented to the student and response data are collected. See Col.13: 51-59. Ditto's invention is capable of selecting the learning item with highest priority score (i.e. highest performance number) since an item with a high priority score has a higher probability of being selected than those with a low priority score. See Col.14: 20-37. Ditto discloses software for implementing a sequencing algorithm, wherein the algorithm sequences the learning items to be presented as a function of the response data collected from prior learning trials. See Col.13: 31-38. Ditto discloses the sequencing algorithm increasing the priority score (i.e. performance number) for each incorrectly answered learning item and decreasing the priority score for each correctly answered learning item, wherein the probability of a particular learning item being again selected by the problem selector increases or decreases as a function of priority score. See Col.14: 20-37. Ditto discloses a computer including a central processing unit, a visual display device, at least one input device, and one or more memory portions. See FIG.7. Ditto discloses wherein each learning item has an associated priority score (i.e. performance number). See Col.14: 13-18. Ditto discloses

wherein the response data includes data relating to speed and accuracy (i.e. the student's response time and the correctness of student's response). Ditto associates with a learning item a priority score (i.e. performance number) as a function of the response data collected from prior learning trials. See Col.14: 7-18. Ditto's discloses restricting one or more learning items from being presented in at least one learning trial based upon the priority score associated with the learning item. See Col.15: 23-60.

Ditto does not disclose expressly a problem database containing a plurality of learning items (i.e. a database with records containing problems or questions), wherein a learning item is presented on each learning trial or a trial record database for storing response data regarding the student's response to each learning item (i.e. user's progress on each memory item) or the response data further including the number of trials since each particular learning item was last presented (i.e. intervals). However, Boon teaches the concept of using a database to store data in Col.2: 66-Col.3: 1 and Col.4: 28-37. Boon also teaches the concept of response data indicating the number of trials since a learning item was last presented. See Col.2: 22-42. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate databases and the response data indicating the number of trials since a learning item was last presented into the method and system of Ditto, in light of the teaching of Boon, in order to store problems or questions with their correct answers or responses, to track the user's progress, and improve retention of learning material.

2. [Claim 2]: Regarding Claim 2, Ditto discloses wherein the response data collected for each learning trial includes the student's accuracy (i.e. whether or not the

answer was correct) in answering the presented learning item and the student's response speed (i.e. the time it takes to respond to a problem) if the item was correctly answered. See Col.13: 56-59.

3. [Claim 3]: Regarding Claim 3, Ditto discloses wherein each learning trial includes a priority score (i.e. performance number) associated with the particular learning item. See Col.13: 31-42.

4. [Claims 4,22]: Regarding Claims 4 and 22, Ditto discloses wherein the sequencing algorithm continuously updates the priority score of each learning item based on the response data collected on the immediately preceding learning trial. See Col.13: 31-38.

5. [Claim 5]: Regarding Claim 5, Ditto discloses wherein the number of trials since a particular learning item was last presented is a variable used by the sequencing algorithm in continuously updating the priority score of each learning item. See Col.15: 23-60.

6. [Claim 6]: Regarding Claim 6, Ditto discloses wherein the relative importance of the student's speed and accuracy in sequencing of learning items is a parameter. See Col.14: 7-13.

7. [Claim 7]: Regarding Claim 7 Ditto discloses wherein the software for implementing a trial loop includes a problem selector, the problem selector selecting the learning item with the highest priority score (i.e. high performance number) for presentation to the student. See Col.14: 29-36.

8. [Claims 8, 23]: Regarding Claims 8 and 23, Ditto discloses wherein when a subset of the plurality of learning items have the same high priority score (i.e. corresponding performance numbers), the problem selector selects the learning item for presentation at random from the subset of learning items with the same high priority score. See Col.16: 13-19.

9. [Claims 9-11]: Regarding Claims 9-11, Ditto discloses wherein the sequencing algorithm increases the priority score for each incorrectly answered learning item, wherein the probability of each incorrectly answered learning item being again selected by the problem selector increases, whereby the delay in learning item reappearance decreases; wherein the sequencing algorithm decreases the priority score for each correctly answered learning item, wherein the probability of that learning item being again selected by the problem selector decreases, whereby the delay in learning item reoccurrence increases; wherein the sequencing algorithm decreases the priority for each correctly answered learning item as a function of the student's response time in answering the question, wherein the delay in a particular learning item's reappearance increases as the student's response time to the particular learning item decreases .

See Col.14: 19-28 and 30-37.

10. [Claims 12, 25]: Regarding Claims 12 and 25, Ditto does not discloses expressly wherein the sequencing algorithm prevents the same learning item from recurring for a predetermined number of trials. However, Boon teaches such in Col.4: 21-23. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the aforementioned limitation into the method and system

of Ditto, in light of the teaching of Boon, in order to test level of retention of the learning item.

11. [Claims 13-14, 26-27]: Regarding Claims 13-14 and 26-27, Ditto discloses wherein each learning item may be assigned an initial priority score (i.e. performance number) and wherein the sequencing algorithm does not modify the priority score of each item until after its first presentation. See Col.13: 31-38.

12. [Claims 15,28]: Regarding Claims 15 and 28, Ditto discloses wherein the initial order of appearance of all, or some, of the learning items may be determined in advance by assigning all, or some, of the learning items initial priority scores in ascending or descending order (i.e. classification scheme). See Col.21:23-26.

13. [Claims 16,29]: Regarding Claims 16 and 29, Ditto does not disclose expressly wherein the software for implementing the trial loop includes a learning item retirement feature, wherein the learning items are retired from the problem database upon meeting a predetermined learning criterion. However, Boon teaches such in Col.5: 37-41. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the aforementioned limitation into the method and system of Ditto, in light of the teaching of Boon, in order eliminate redundancy.

14. [Claims 17,30]: Regarding Claims 17 and 30, Ditto discloses wherein a learning criterion for each particular learning item is a function of the student's accuracy in answering the learning item, and response speed for each correct answer, over a predetermined number of repetitions of the learning item. See Col.14: 30-36.

15. [Claim 18-20]: Regarding Claims 18-20, Ditto does not discloses expressly wherein a session resumption feature stores an individual learner's data for learning items in terms of problem retirement status for continuing the learning during another session at a later time; wherein the session resumption feature allows learning to continue at another time whence the retirement count of retired learning items is reduced, bringing them back for review and "re-retiring" if performance still meets learning criteria; wherein the session resumption feature allows previously retired learning items brought back for review to rejoin the active problem set if performance criteria do not meet the previously established learning criteria. However, Boon teaches such in Col.5: 37-49. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the aforementioned limitation into the method and system of Ditto, in light of teaching of Boon, in order to measure memory of the learning item.

16. [Claim 24]: Regarding Claim 24, Ditto discloses wherein the sequencing algorithm decreases the priority score for each correctly answered learning item as a function of the student's response time in answering the question, wherein the faster the student's response time the greater the decrease in priority score. See Col.14: 29-37.

17. [Claims 65, 68, 72]: Regarding Claims 65, 68, and 72, Ditto does not disclose expressly wherein relative importance of speed and accuracy may be adjusted to suit different learning material, tasks or individuals. However, Boon teaches the concept of a parameter (e.g. retirement criteria) wherein the one or more parameters may be adjusted to suit different individuals (e.g. bringing material back in an active mode if

forgotten). See Col.5: 36-46. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the aforementioned limitation into the method and system of Ditto, in light of the teaching of Boon, in order to facilitate in retention of material.

Claims 63-64, 66-67, and 69-71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ditto/Boon as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Ho et al. (US 5,863, 208).

[Claims 63-64, 66-67, 69-71]: Regarding Claims 63-64, 66-67, and 69-71, Ditto/Boon does not disclose expressly wherein the sequencing algorithm sequences categories of learning items (e.g. High School Algebra, Integers), wherein the learning items comprise categories of learning items, and building a plurality of learning items representing categories of items. However, Ho teaches categories of learning items in Col.3: 11-50. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the aforementioned limitations into the method and system of Ditto/Boon, in light of the teaching of Ho, in order to facilitate instruction in a subject.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. See further explanations in rejection above. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly,

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chanda L. Harris whose telephone number is 703-308-8358. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30am-4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Hughes can be reached on 703-308-1806. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.


S. THOMAS HUGHES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700

Ch.
ch.